



# Manhattan Project Sites Special Resources Study

Dear Reader,

From March through June, 2006 the National Park Service (NPS) conducted public meetings in Hanford, Washington; Los Alamos, New Mexico; Oak Ridge, Reservation site in Tennessee; and Dayton, Ohio. Many of you participated in these meetings and many more of you provided written comments via comment cards and the NPS Planning, Environment and Public Comment website (PEPC). Thank you for your participation and continued interest in this effort. Your input often included inspiring stories and remembrances of this important era in American history.

We are sending out this newsletter to keep you aware of the progress of the planning team's activities and schedule. In this newsletter we have summarized the many comments we received in a way that we hope accurately reflects your vision for the future and concerns for these special places.

Overall, you expressed great support for the protection & commemoration of the sites and in developing partnerships with local and regional organizations. We will be taking your ideas into consideration along with requirements of Congress and National Park Service policies to develop alternatives for the management and interpretation of these sites. Although we may not be able to include all of your ideas or hoped for actions in the alternatives, they have provided the team with insights to help guide our management direction. Your thoughts will assist us in preparing the preliminary draft alternatives.

We appreciate your continued support and involvement in this process. Please check the schedule in this newsletter to learn about additional opportunities for participation.

Carla McConnell

Project Manager

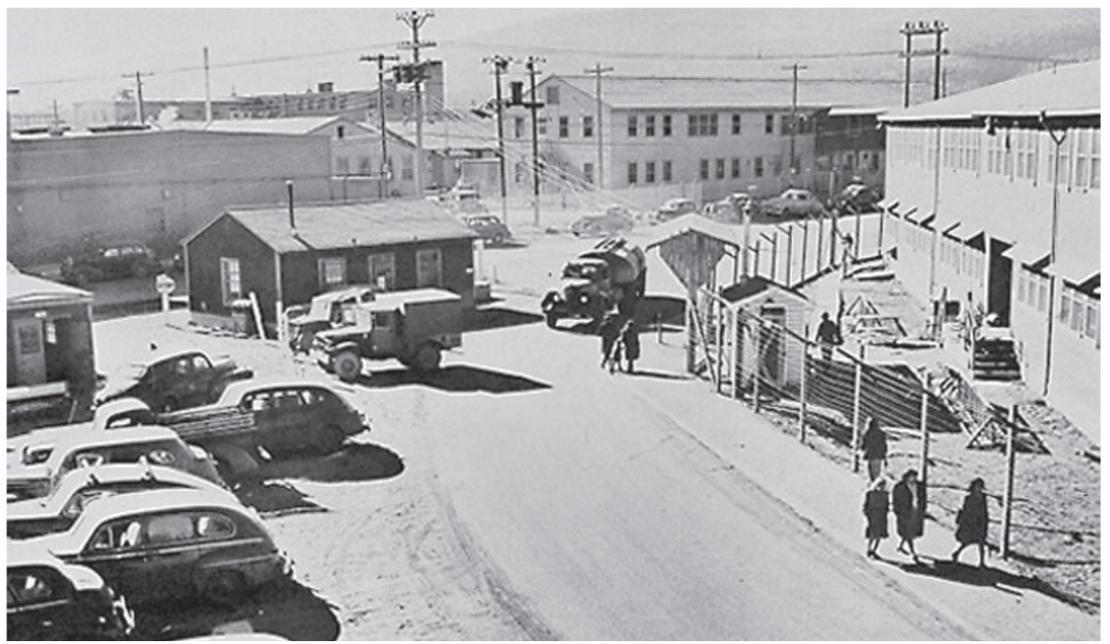
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To follow the planning process and access project documents on the internet please follow these steps:

1. Log on to <http://parkplanning.nps.gov>
2. Click on the **Advanced Search** link located in the text of the page
3. Under the **Project Type** pull down, select **Special Resource Study/ New Area Study**
4. Click the **Search** button
5. Click on the **Manhattan Project Sites Special Resources Study** link

Or type this address into your web browser:  
<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/projectHome.cfm?parkID=422&projectId=14946>



1940's Los Alamos Street, New Mexico

## Project Background

The Manhattan Project was a top-secret program implemented within the United States during World War II for the purpose of constructing a nuclear weapon in advance of Nazi Germany which initiated atomic energy research in the late 1930's. The Manhattan Project, as well as similar weaponry development around the globe, resulted in scientific and technological advancements that transformed the world and ushered in the atomic age. Beginning in August of 1942, the Manhattan Project was a \$2.2 billion effort that employed some 130,000 workers at its peak, but was kept largely out of public view and knowledge. Responsibility for process development, materials procurement, engineering design, and site selection for the secret project was assigned to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers which established the Manhattan Engineer District. For the purposes of this study the Manhattan Project is considered to have concluded on January 1, 1947 with the creation of the Atomic Energy Commission.

On October 18, 2004, President George W. Bush approved Public Law 108-340, "The Manhattan Project National Historical Park Study Act" directing the Secretary of the Interior, in consultation with the Department of Energy (DOE), to conduct a study for the preservation and interpretation of historic sites associated with the Manhattan Project and evaluate their potential for inclusion in the National Park System. The four sites currently being studied are: Hanford, Washington; Los Alamos National Laboratory and town site in New Mexico; the Oak Ridge Reservation site in Tennessee; and sites in Dayton, Ohio.

## Criteria for Proposed Additions to the National Park System

Sites are most commonly added to the NPS by an act of Congress. However, before Congress makes the decision to add a new site to the NPS system, information is needed about the quality of the resources and if they meet established criteria. The NPS answers these questions by conducting special resource studies in order to gather information to determine the site's level of significance. If a site meets the standard for **national significance**, additional information is gathered to determine its **suitability** and **feasibility** as a park unit.

### National Significance

When determining the level of national significance for a proposed new site, the National Park Service is required by law to use the standards as set forth in 36 CFR, Part 65, "Criteria for National Historic Landmarks." A proposed area is considered nationally significant if it meets the National Historic Landmark (NHL) criteria.

### Suitability

A site is considered suitable for inclusion in the National Park System if it represents a natural or cultural resource type that is not already adequately represented in the System, or is not comparably represented and protected for public enjoyment by other federal agencies; tribal, state, or local governments; or the private sector.

### Feasibility

To be feasible as a new unit an area must (1) be of sufficient size and appropriate configuration to ensure sustainable resource protection and visitor enjoyment and (2) be capable of efficient administration by the NPS at a reasonable cost.

## Summary of Public Comments

### Mailed and Electronic Comments

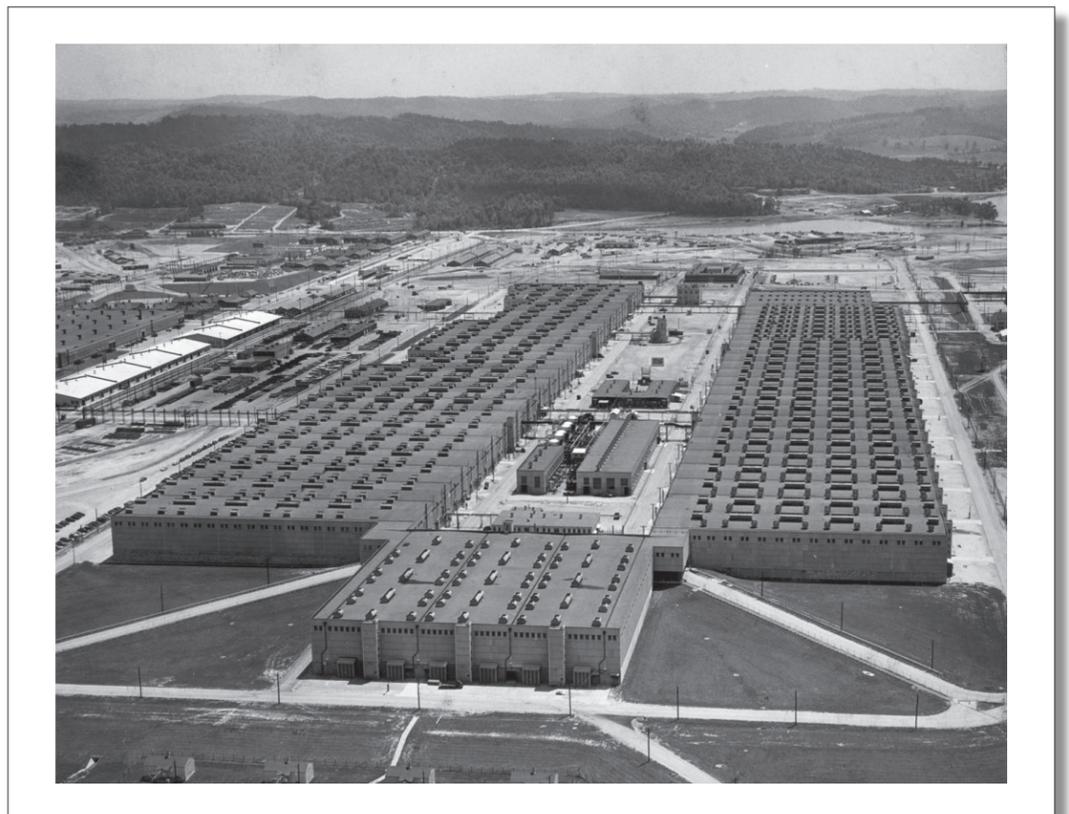
Preceding the public scoping meetings a project newsletter was sent to approximately 5,000 persons, requesting written or e-mailed comments to questions regarding their “20-year vision,” “concerns for the future,” and “opportunities/actions to be explored.” Over 350 written comments were received from mailers and responses to the PEPC project posting.

Those responses indicated that there seems to be little in the way of controversy for the development of NPS units within any of the four study areas. A majority of the respondents support the establishment of a park. There were numerous comments expressing a desire to link the study areas, particularly their interpretation, together - possibly through the internet. There were some comments, from all four sites, expressing the opinion that the development of a park unit is not a worthwhile endeavor, providing as reasons: not the best use of the facilities, unwanted government intervention, high cost, and opposition to commemorating atomic weaponry. Many expressed the need to tell all sides of the story in an even handed manner, including the scientific triumph as well as the devastating effects of nuclear weaponry.

There was little difference of opinion regarding the need and desire for the preservation of the facilities and interpretation of the activities that led to the development of the atomic bomb. The majority of the respondents support the recognition of the efforts of the Manhattan Project. By far, those who expressed opinions wanted both pro and con perspectives about the scientific triumph and use of nuclear weaponry presented in an even handed manner.



Robert Oppenheimer and General Groves



K-25 Plant, Oakridge, Tennessee

In general, five primary themes emerged from the comments:

- Remembrance of the effort involved in the development of the atomic bomb
- The effect the use of the atomic bomb had on the world
- Concern that the Manhattan Project and its sites will be destroyed and forgotten by future generations
- Concern that there will be insufficient funding by Congress to develop and maintain the park units
- Action must be taken quickly to capture oral histories and memories of aging participants of the Manhattan Project

Visions for the future interpretation included reconstruction of facilities, living history presentations, variously sized museums with a preference for small museums, tours and interpretation using the original facilities. With the exception of the Hanford locality there seemed to be more support for an interpretive site or small museum charged with preservation and interpretation rather than a more formal park unit. This may be due to the nature of continued use of the various facilities by the Department of Energy (DOE).

## Schedule

	Planning Activity	Dates	Public Involvement Opportunities
1	<b>Set the stage for planning</b> Listen to ideas, determine issues and concerns	Spring 2006	The public is invited to attend meetings.
2	<b>Develop Preliminary Alternatives: (we are at this stage):</b> Identify a range of reasonable alternatives for NPS involvement, assess their effects, analyze public reactions, and select a preferred alternative	Summer 2006 to Spring 2007	Provide comments on the initial alternatives by using a response form. Attend public meetings and provide comments
3	<b>Prepare and publish Draft Special Resource Study/ Environmental Evaluation:</b> Prepare draft describing the management alternatives, and impacts; distribute to the public	Summer 2007 to Spring 2008	Provide written comments on the draft document. Attend public meetings and provide comments.
4	<b>Revise and publish Special Resource Study/ Environmental Evaluation:</b> Analyze comments, revise draft document, distribute to Congress and the public	Fall 2008 to Spring 2009	

## Public Scoping Meetings

The planning team conducted two public meetings for each of the study areas and an additional meeting with local stake holders. The objective of the meetings was to present and describe the purpose and goals of the Special Resource Study and to obtain input on issues, concerns, and vision for the future for the various sites. Approximately 300 persons attended the eight public scoping meetings.

### General Comments

The overwhelming majority of public meeting participants would like to see some type of involvement by the National Park Service in interpretation of the Manhattan Project. At each site at least one person spoke against any preservation/interpretation of these sites as such activities might be seen as glorifying war and the use of nuclear weapons. Concern was also expressed that NPS involvement with Manhattan Project sites would reduce funding for other park sites.

General comments included the need for linking sites & overall interpretation of the Manhattan Project, the importance and impact of seeing the “real thing”. There was recognition of the controversial aspects of the story & often a desire to use the controversy as a means to encourage thoughtful discussion of issues. Participants in Richland, Oak Ridge and Los Alamos all expressed concern over the aging of the remaining Manhattan Project workers & the short time left to collect oral histories. The scale and speed of the project and impact on our post WWII world in the fields of technology, international relations, and health research, were mentioned many times at all sites. Finally, people from Richland, Oak Ridge and Los Alamos expressed concern about DOE’s commitment to both environmental clean-up, preservation of the significant sites and increasing public access to these sites.

### Hanford

A high level of concern over the fate of the B-reactor was expressed. DOE’s plan is to seal or “cocoon” the building, but has delayed action for several years. Participants would like to see public access to the reactor from the Vernita Bridge with a possible visitor center in the former Bruggerman Warehouse near the bridge. They would like interpretation and access of the Hanford site to tie into the development of the future Hanford Reach National Monument museum, possibly developing train and boat tours to Hanford from Richland.



*Public Meeting, Dayton, Ohio, May 2006*

### Oak Ridge

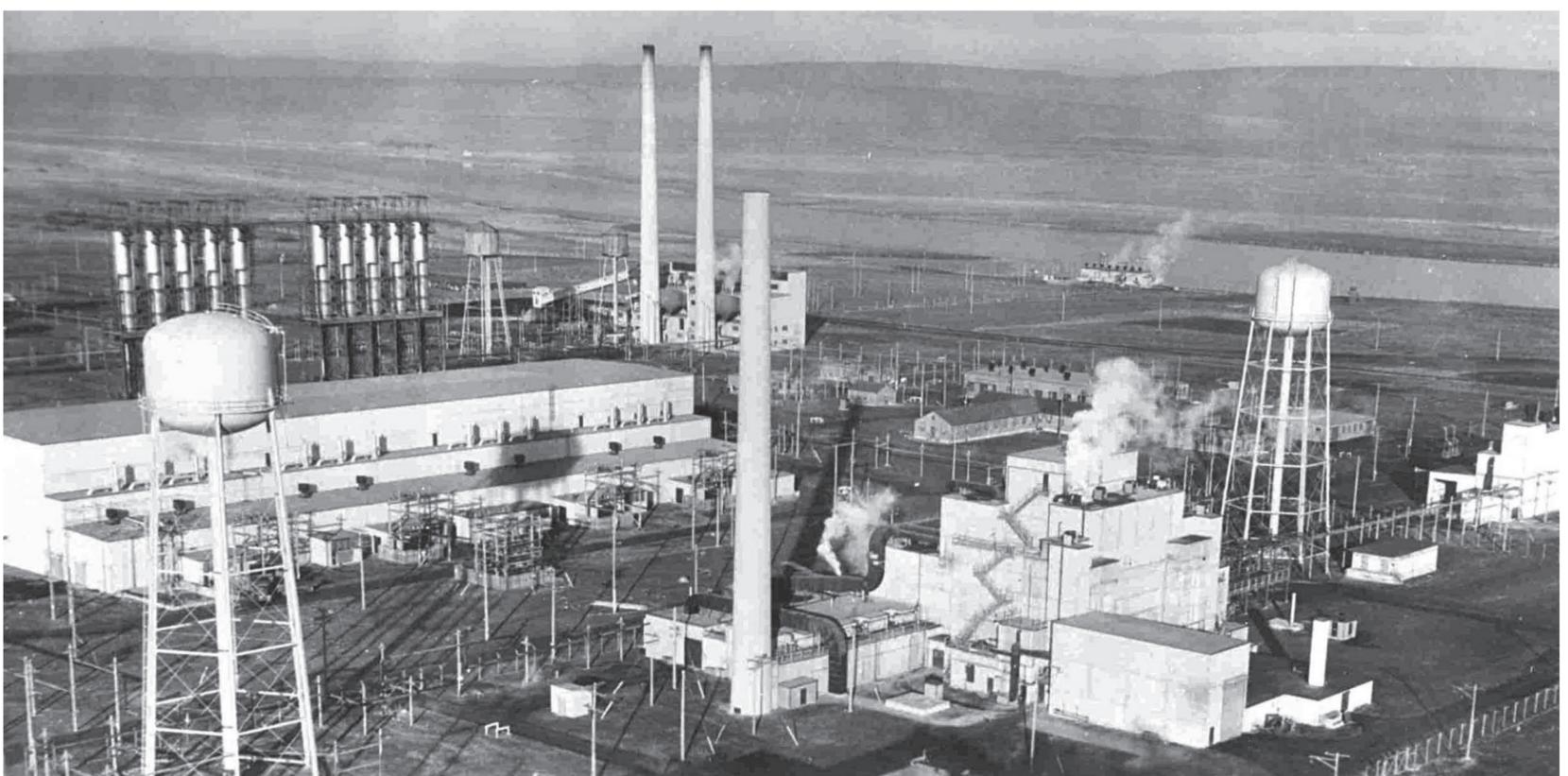
In Oak Ridge there is a desire to expand the interpretation beyond the technical facilities to include the story of a massive planned community, the “ABC” or “Alphabet” houses, segregation in housing, the significant role of women workers, and the “Secret City” story of the Oak Ridge community. DOE has committed to saving the north end of K-25, but public accessibility is a major issue. The graphite reactor has been open to the public, strong support for opening the Calutron in the Y-12 area was voiced, but due to it’s location within a highly secure area and potential for re-activation opening seems unlikely.

### Dayton

Much of the public comment focused on activities at the Mound site which occurred after the Manhattan Project and relates primarily to the Cold War and Atomic Energy Commission. Participants stressed the tie-in of Manhattan Project work in Dayton to other WWII efforts in the area as well as the general history of technological innovation from this area.

### Los Alamos

Participants discussed the importance of tying into the Trinity site. The importance of the social history of Los Alamos during Manhattan Project was stressed as well as the potential for partnerships between NPS, the Los Alamos Historical Society and Bradbury Science Museum. Los Alamos National Lab has become more engaged in preservation of the technical sites but public access is a major concern.



*B- Reactor 1946, Hanford, Washington*

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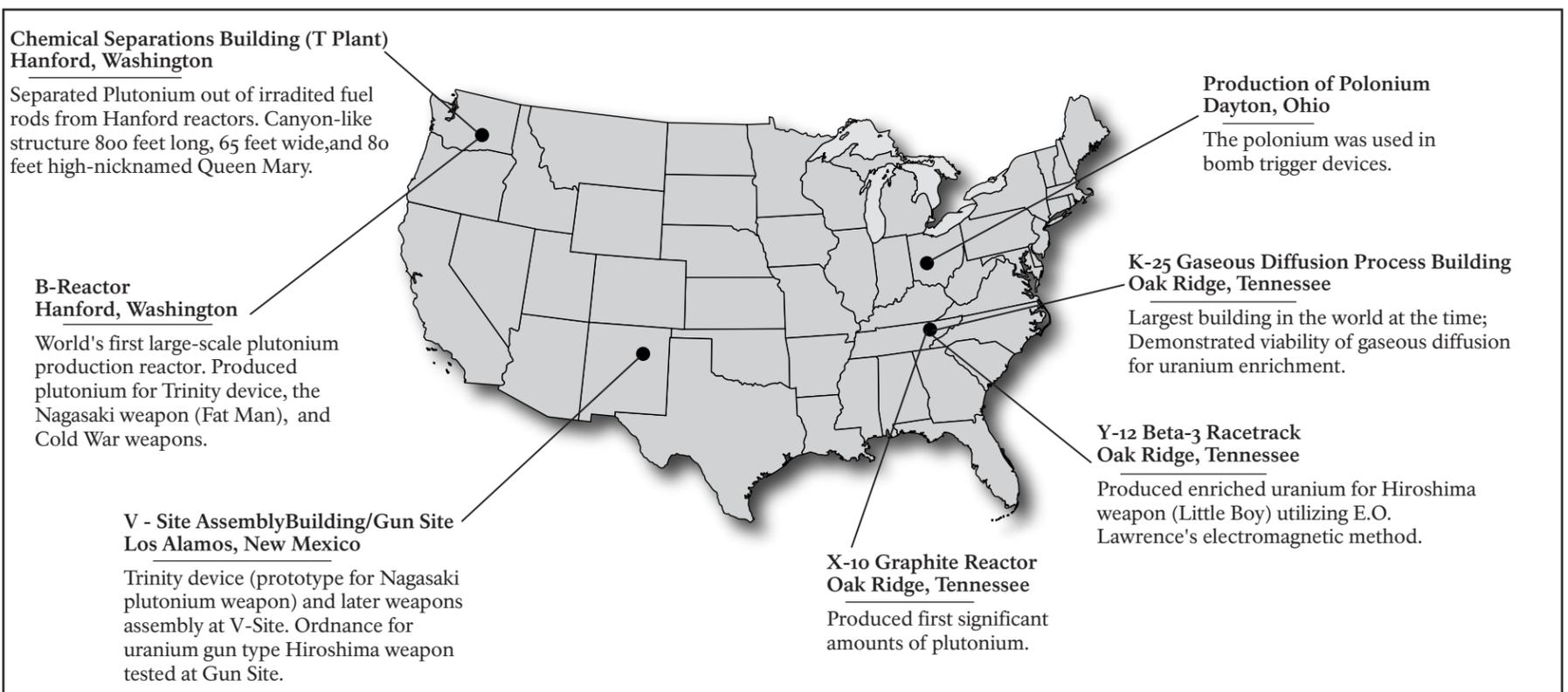
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## Manhattan Project Sites Special Resources Study



### Manhattan Project Sites Special Resource Study Locations



Thank you for your involvement in the Manhattan Project Sites Special Resources Study!